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ABSTRACT

These instructional objectives have been selected from materials submitted to the Curriculum Laboratory of the Graduate School of Education at UCLA. Arranged by major course goals, these objectives are offered simply as samples that may be used where they correspond to the skills, abilities, and attitudes instructors want their students to acquire. These objectives may also serve as models for assisting instructors to translate other instructional units into specific measurable terms. (MB)

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Instructional Objectives for a Junior College Course in Major American Authors

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ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
University of California
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INFORMATION

SET 1

MAJOR AMERICAN AUTHORS

Unit I

A. The introduction to this unit will present the 19th Century heritage of the novel, with the emphasis on James Fennimore Cooper as an example of the Romance and Nathaniel Hawthorne as an example of the Novel, the Romance concerning itself with the "marvelous", the imaginable, the possible, the Novel confining itself to the probable and the ordinary. Henry James will be examined in the tradition of the novel, his innovations in the use of psychological technique, the "international novel", and the controlled point of view providing the reference points for a general discussion of the narrative aspects of the novel - plot, character development, theme, point of view, and style (symbolism, diction, time line). Theodore Dreiser will be presented as an example of Naturalism in the tradition of Zola, allowing also a contrast with Realism, as exemplified in Europe by Balzac and Flaubert and in America by William Dean Howells and Henry James. Dreiser will be examined in the light of the impact of Darwinism upon society and its implications for modern man as expressed in Sister Carie as well as in the writings of Herbert Spencer and T. H. Huxley. The translation of social Darwinism and its resultant philosophy of pessimistic determinism into literary terms in Sister Carie will provide the basis for an interpretation of the technical and social aspects of the novel.

Unit I (cont'd)

The second part of this unit includes an introduction to the traditional forms of poetry (sonnet, lyric, epic, etc.) and a study of metrics. The break with metrics by Walt Whitman and the metrical innovations of Edwin Arlington Robinson ("sprung rhythm") will be related to the poetry of Robert Frost. Frost's poetry will be discussed and analysed on the basis of theme, imagery, symbolism, metrics, and form.

Goals: (1) The student will understand the 19th Century heritage of the novel as it relates to Henry James and Theodore Dreiser.

(2) The student will become acquainted with the formal aspects of the novel and some of the technical problems faced by authors in the composition of novels.

(3) The student will recognize aspects of pessimistic determinism in Sister Carie as it relates to a concept of man's place in society and his function as a human being.

(4) The student will be able to recognize traditional forms of poetry and to analyze metric patterns.

(5) The student will be able to analyze Robert Frost's poetry using the criteria of imagery, symbolism, form, metric, and theme.

B. Behavioral Objectives

1. Given a list of 10 literary terms relating to the novel (e.g., plot, character, theme, point of view, Romance, Realism, Naturalism), the student will correctly define at least 8 of these terms in 20 words or less in a 30 minute closed book exercise written in class. 80%

B. Behavioral Objectives (cont'd)

2. Given a set of 15 matching items, the student will demonstrate his grasp of the 19th Century heritage of the novel by correctly matching at least 10 of the items in a 30 minute closed book exercise written in class. 85%

3. Outside of class, the student will prepare an essay not to exceed 250 words in which he evaluated the concept of pessimistic determinism as Dreiser presents it in Sister Carie and as the student sees it in relation to his own concept of the individual in society. 100%

4. Given an example of a Shakespearean sonnet and a ballad, the student will identify the form and the metric pattern in a 15 minute closed book written exercise in class. 75%

5. Given Frost's poem, The Silken Tent, the student will, outside of class, prepare an analysis of the poem not to exceed 200 words based on at least 3 of the following criteria: form, meter, imagery, theme(s), diction, rhyme. 80%

Unit II

A. Unit II will begin with Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby to set the mood of the Twenties. The concern for personal wealth, the hedonism, the

Unit II (cont'd)

sense of a lost past, and the transience of youth will be examined as relevant social concerns. The concept of the real versus the ideal will be introduced as a continuing theme in American literature (also found in James). Fitzgerald's symbolism, characterization, and narrative technique will be examined and contrasted with that of James and Dreiser. T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, as the co-founders of modern poetry, will be related to the Imagist movement, the concern for a loss of tradition, and the use of myth, psychology and the cultural past as poetic devices. John Steinbeck provides one of the best examples of the proletariat novel and raises pertinent questions about the viability of the American way of life. Eugene O'Neill, the only American dramatist to win the Nobel Prize, will be represented by The Hairy Ape, a short, Expressionistic play depicting the dehumanization of man in a mechanized society. An introduction to modern drama, with its particular qualities and its European tradition (Ibsen, Strindberg, Shaw) will be presented, with the emphasis on drama as action rather than as a purely literary form.

Goals: (1) The student will evaluate the life-style of the Twenties as presented in Fitzgerald's, The Great Gatsby, as it relates to present-day life.

(2) The student will understand the despair which permeates Eliot and Pound's poetry as evidence of the disillusionment of WWI, the growing sense of alienation on both a personal and a cultural level, and an attempt to reconcile the personal needs of the individual with the demands of an impersonal, complex society.

Unit II (cont'd)

(3) The student will recognize the stylistic innovations of Eliot and Pound.

(4) The student will understand what is meant by the "proletariat novel."

(5) The student will understand that drama is more than a literary genre, and that it is intended to be presented on the stage rather than read.

B. Behavioral Objectives

1. Outside of class, the student will write an essay of not more 250 words in which he presents the society Fitzgerald depicts in The Great Gatsby and either supports or denies the validity of Fitzgerald's criticism applied to today's society. 100%

2. Students will be divided into groups of 5-8 and given a copy of T. S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men" which the groups will discuss for 20 minutes using the criteria of form, symbolism and theme, choosing one member to present the results of the discussion to the entire class. 100 %

3. Outside of class the student will read at least one article (or section of a book) on the Imagist Movement in poetry and provide a resume of his findings in an essay not to exceed 150 words. 100%

4. Groups of 5-8 students will prepare in collaboration outside of class 15 minute oral reports to be presented in class on one of each of the following topics (i.e., one topic per group) related to The Grapes of Wrath: Grapes as a proletariat novel, Steinbeck's narrative style, character development, symbolism, the pessimism or optimism of the ending. 100%

B. Behavioral Objectives (cont'd)

5. The student will attend one live performance of a play (either (1) written by one of the playwrights studied in the course, (2) written by a 20th century American playwright or (3) written by a 20th century continental playwright) and will prepare a critique outside of class not to exceed 500 words in which he gives the type of play, the symbolism (if any), special stage effects (if any), effectiveness of the dialogue, theme, and an evaluation of the dramatic inevitability of the action. 80%

Unit III

A. The student will be introduced to the short story through examples written by Hemingway and Faulkner. The short story differs from the novel in its intensity, lack of complexity (comparatively), and its usually single sustained theme. Hemingway's straightforward, simple narrative style

Unit III (cont'd)

will be contrasted with Faulkner's more dense, convoluted, syntactically complex approach. The answer the two writers provide for the problems of the individual in 20th century society will also be contrasted, Hemingway opting for an individual stoicism in conjunction with the healing powers of nature, and Faulkner choosing to recreate his world on the basis of myth, archetype and ritual in an attempt to escape domination by time. Wallace Stevens provides an example of the almost purely aesthetic artist whose poems are a representation of the poetic process in psycho-symbolic terms. Arthur Miller's play, Death of a Salesman, deals with the displacement of modern man and his struggle for personal unity. The play evidences both Realistic and Expressionistic techniques as it reveals the process of disintegration of a human mind. The theme of the ideal versus the real can be seen in the characterization of Willy Loman.

Goals: (1) The student will be able to recognize the differences in technique inherent in the short story and the novel.

(2) The student will be able to contrast the syntactic styles of Hemingway and Faulkner.

(3) The student will evaluate the answers provided by Hemingway and Faulkner for modern man.

(4) The student will be able to compare the personal symbolism created by Wallace Stevens in his poetry with the mythical and cultural symbolism of a poet like Eliot.

(5) The student will recognize the Expressionistic technique used by Miller in Death of a Salesman, and will be able to compare and contrast Death of a Salesman and the Hairy Ape on the basis of technique and theme.

Unit III (cont'd)

B. Behavioral Objectives

1. Given a list of 10 characteristics of the novel and the short story, the student will identify the characteristics appropriate to each or both in a 20 minute closed book exercise written in class. 80%

2. Given two passages in class, one written by Hemingway and one by Faulkner, the student will, within 30 minutes and with no source material, correctly identify the authorship of the passage and list at least 3 distinctive features on which he based his identification. 75%

3. Groups of 5-8 students, assigned either Hemingway's Big Two-Hearted River or Faulkner's A Rose for Emily, will discuss in 20 minute buzz sessions in class the answers each writer offers for modern man, a representative of each group reporting their conclusions to the class. 100%

4. Given a copy of Wallace Steven's poem, 10 O'Clock, the student will underline the imagery, interpret it on the basis of Steven's personal symbolic scheme and provide a probable interpretation in a 45 minute exercise written in class. 75%

5. Outside of class, the student will prepare an essay not to exceed 300 words in which he compares and contrasts Miller's Death of a Salesman and O'Neill's The Hairy Ape using the criteria of technique, form, and theme. 75%

Unit IV

A. Unit IV must necessarily fail in its representation of the contemporary scene in literature, but in an introductory course one important

Unit IV (cont'd)

goal is to acquaint the student with the authors who have contributed significantly to the literary life of the century and who have thereby paved the way for those contemporary writers who often appear more relevant and less "dated". However, Albee and Barth provide examples of one of the most important philosophical results of World War II, Existentialism. Albee, the only major American playwright participating in the Theatre of the Absurd (an offshoot of Existentialism), has managed in Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? to imploy a symbolic technique with such a realistic effect that many people view the play as merely an exploration of a couple's marital difficulties. John Barth's End of the Road is the transformation of Existentialist thought into the novel. This unit will provide a synopsis of Existentialist philosophy as reflected in Camus and Sartre and as it relates to the two works being studied.

Goals: (1) The student will understand the tenets of Existentialist philosophy.

(2) The student will be able to compare the dramatic techniques and themes of Miller and Albee.

(3) The student will be able to interpret The End of the Road in the light of Existentialist philosophy.

B. Behavioral Objectives

1. Given a set of 10 True-False items, the student will correctly indicate at least 7 items which are True or False of Existentialist philosophy.

2. Given a checklist of 10 characteristics related to Death of a Salesman and Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, the student will correctly

B. Behavioral Objectives (cont'd)

identify at least 6 in relation to the appropriate play. 80%

3. The student will present a 10 minute oral report in class discussing the significance of the beginning phrase of <u>End of the Road</u>, "In a sense, I am Jacob Horner." (This would be handled as a "spot check" in which only 3 or 4 students actually present reports).

SET 2

MAJOR AMERICAN AUTHORS

Specific Measurable Objectives & Goals

1. Unit I - Background

   Goal: The student will understand the literary and historical background of America from its beginnings to the end of the 18th century.

   Objective: In lecture and discussion, he will note the factors of early America's cultural fabric (history, sociology, economy, etc.)

   Objective: In lecture and discussion, he will note the European intellectual tradition that helped shape the American mind.

2. Poe & Hawthorne

   Goal: The student will have a grasp of Poe's aesthetic theory and Hawthorne's romantic moralism.

   Objective: Given the major components of Poe's esthetic theory, the student will write a 250 word paper relating it to assigned poems.

   Objective: In lecture and discussion, the student will note the allegorical dimensions of Hawthorne's imagination.

   Objective: Given the names of 15 Hawthorne characters, he will match them with the appropriate story. 80%

3. Emerson & Thoreau

   Goal: The student will understand the basic concepts of transcendentalism.

   Objective: Outside of class, he will relate

transcendental concepts to Walden and Emerson's poetry in a 500 word paper. 85%

Objective: In lecture and discussion, he will note the specific dimensions of the factors of transcendentalism: nature, religion, mysticism, intuition). 70%

Objective: He will participate in a class discussion relating how the transcendental tradition affects the contemporary cultural matrix. 70%

4. Melville

Goal: The student will understand the contribution of Melville, and how his fiction synthesized many strains of the American mind.

Objective: In lecture and discussion, the student will note the aspects of Melville's metaphysical imagination. 70%

Objective: Given characters and terms from Billy Budd, he will identify them. 80%

Objective: In lecture and discussion, he will be given the fundamental concepts of biographical criticism, and relate them to Melville's life as man and artist, and compare them to the contemporary situation of the creative individual. 70%

5. Whitman

Goal: The student will understand Whitman's achievment in becoming America's first major poet.

Objective: In lecture and discussion, the student will understand the creative process through"Song of Myself." 70%

Objective: The student will write a 300 word paper OUTSIDE OF CLASS explicating theme and imagery of either "Out of the cradle, endlessly rocking," or "When Lilacs last in the Dooryard bloomed." 85%

Objective: He will be able to identify important poetical terms. 70%

6. Mark Twain

Goal: The student will understand why Mark Twain is often thought of as the father of modern American fiction.

Objective: In lecture and discussion, the student will note the elements of Twain's humor (irony, hyperbole, understatement, etc.). 70%

Objective: In lecture and discussion, the student will note the bitterness that Twain came to know as an artist and how it applies to today. 70%

Objective: He will corectly identify true and

false items, ten of them, concerning the art, life and times of Mark Twain. 70%

7. Henry James

Goal: The student will understand James as the most sublime and refined example of the realist school of fiction.

Objective: In lecture and discussion, the student will note the attributes of the novel of manners. 70%

Objective: Outside of class, the student will write a 300 word paper analyzing James' use of setting, dialogue, characterization, tone, etc., in his fiction of sensibility. 85%

Objective: In lecture and discussion, he will note the balance of masculine and feminine principles in James, and how expatriation has become a common practice of the American artist. 70%

8. Frost and Eliot

Goal: The student will understand the impact of originality that these two major poets had on modern times.

Objective: In lecture and discussion, the

student will note the spoken word technique in Frost, his conversational tone, use of image, metaphor and irony. 70%

Objective: In lecture and discussion, he will note the scholarly sources of Eliot's imagery and theme, and his philosophy of literature. 70%

Objective: Given a definition of "modern," the student will note what qualities apply best to each poet in a multiple-choice quiz. 80%

9. Fitzgerald and Hemingway

Goal: The student will understand Hemingway in terms of the theme of physical courage, and its importance within the framework of American culture.

Objective: In lecture and discussion, the student will note the elements of Hemingway's dead-pan technique and terse style, and its implications. 70%

Objective: Given a comprehensive definition of the "Lost Generation," he will apply it to the theme of The Sun Also Rises in a paper of 200 words. 85%

Objective: The student will note what is the "Hemingway Code" in a true and false quiz of ten items. 70%

Goal: The student will have a comprehensive knowledge of the theme of wealth in The Great

Gatsby.

Objective: The student will note the predominant personality characteristics of the four major characters in a true and false quiz (lust, greed, arrogance, honesty). 80%

Outside of class, using all available references, he will write a 500 word paper explicating the theme based upon the actions of the characters of the novel. Paper to include the following points: Gatsby's relationship with Daisy, Carroway's appreciation of Gatsby, the people of West Egg vs. East Egg. 85%

10. William Faulkner

Goal: The student will have a comprehensive knowledge of The Sound and the Fury.

Objective: In lecture and discussion, he will note the personality structures of the four major characters, and how each views time (e.g. Benjy is an idiot, living in the timeless id, events have no logic). 70%

Objective: Given the elements of tragedy, he will be able to define what it is in a true and false quiz. 80%

Objective: Outside of class, he will write a 500 word paper concerning the tragic dimensions of the novel in terms of the characters and time. Points to be included: Dilsey's

ability to hold the Compson family together; Jason as representative businessman; the relationship of the decline of civilization to the decline of the family. 85%

Goal: The student will understand Faulkner as a novelist who explores the "truth of the heart."

Objective: In lecture and discussion, he will note the attributes of "A Rose for Emily." 70%

Objective: In lecure and discussion, he will note the thematic tensions of white vs. black and civilization vs. wilderness in "The Bear." 70%

11. The Depression

Goal: The student will understand the impact of proletarian literature upon the modern consciousness.

Objective: In lecture and discussion, the student will note the sentimentality of Steinbeck and its meaning. 70%

Objective: In lecture and discussion, the student will note the development and effect of Marxist criticism, and its effect upon the modern temper. 70%

Objective: The student will write a 2000 word paper outside of class explicating the theme of one of the following novels in terms of the

events of the proletarian movement:

Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath

Steinbeck's In Dubious Battle

Caldwell's Tobacco Road

Paper to include the following points: the growth of the labor movement; the trend to see the poor as oppressed victims; the birth of the grandeur of the "common man."

This paper can generally be considered a term paper, and students should begin their research into this effort as soon as possible. The paper will be due at the time of the final examination, and will be worth thrice the value of [illegible] other objectives. 85%